

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
**MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE MANUAL**

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Release No. 199

TRANSMITTAL SHEET

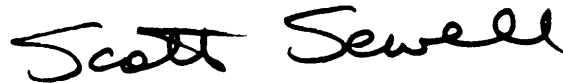
October 23, 1991

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SUBJECT: Administrative Series  
Part 382 Records Operations  
Chapter 2 Mail Management

EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL TRANSMITTED:

This chapter is to establish policy, responsibilities, and procedures for the Mail Management Program within the Minerals Management Service (MMS).



Director

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FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

REMOVE:

None

INSERT:

<u>Part</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Release</u>
382	2	1-3	199

Handbook:

**MMSM 382.2-H** Mail Management (The handbook may be filed separately from the basic manual chapter.)

Note: Mail Management Handbook, Chapter 2, Illustration 1 (Mail Stop Codes) is not included but will be issued separately after reorganizations are approved.

OPR: Records and Mail Management Section  
Support Services Branch  
Financial and Support Services Division  
Office of Administration  
Office of Management and Budget

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
**MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE MANUAL**

Administrative Series

Part 382 Records Operations

Chapter 2 Mail Management

382.2.1

1. Purpose. This chapter establishes policy and responsibilities for the Mail Management Program within the Minerals Management Service (MMS). Procedures are contained in the Mail Management Handbook (382.2-H).

2. Authority.

A. 41 CFR 201-45.107, Mail Management.

B. Departmental Manual (382 DM 2 Mail Management).

3. Reference. U.S. Postal Service Domestic Mail Manual.

4. Definitions.

A. Mail is defined as items of communication in readable form, usually in hard copy, often transmitted in and out of MMS's organizations by means of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), private carrier, or internal mail system. This definition applies to incoming, outgoing, and internal mail, and generally covers official correspondence, post cards, documents, packages, publications, telecommunications, and other communications received for distribution or dispatch.

B. Official Mail is mail used to conduct the business of the MMS. As such, it is considered Government property and is subject to all rules governing the use of Government property.

C. Penalty Mail is official mail which is authorized by law to be transmitted without prepayment of postage.

D. Endorsement is the designation of the "type" or "class" of postal service selected by the mailer and marked on the mail piece in the space between the postage stamp area and the address.

E. Self-Mailer is a single mail item, other than a parcel, which is not enclosed in an envelope or other outer cover and displays the endorsement, address, and return address directly on the item itself.

5. Policy. It is the policy of the MMS to maintain an effective, efficient, and economical mail management program by:

A. Prohibiting the use of MMS mail services for personal use, including receipt of incoming, dispatch of outgoing, and internal distribution services.

B. Utilizing the metered mail system for all outgoing correspondence.

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382.2.5C

C. Refusing postage due mail received from the public (see MMSM 382.2-H, Chapter 2.5B for exceptions).

D. Maintaining reliable and effective internal mail handling, pickup, and delivery service.

E. Routing incoming mail directly to addressee unopened.

F. Providing technical assistance to mail originators.

G. Keeping abreast of USPS and General Services Administration (GSA) regulations, postal services and fees, and promulgating information to mail originators for information and application.

H. Utilizing the best available mail service for reliable transmission at the lowest cost.

I. Using "Special Attention Mail" (blue) envelopes only for confidential/sensitive material which is to be opened only by the addressee (or designee).

6. Responsibilities.

A. The Associate Director for Management and Budget has overall responsibility for the Mail Management Program.

B. The Deputy Associate Director for Administration has responsibility for implementation of the Mail Management Program.

C. The Administrative Service Center Managers or Office of Program Services Chief are responsible for designating Mail Liaison Officers and implementing the Mail Management Program in their area of responsibility.

D. The Chief, Records and Mail Management Section (Mail Manager) is responsible for:

- (1) Carrying out the Mail Management Program;
- (2) Managing the Penalty Mail Reimbursement Program;
- (3) Representing the MMS in dealing with the USPS, GSA, and other Government Agencies on mail matters;
- (4) Taking appropriate action to ensure that the mail program operates in an efficient, cost-effective manner;
- (5) Ensuring implementation of the provisions of this chapter; and

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(6) Providing information, guidance, and new policies to the Administrative Service Centers (ASC's) relative to mail management.

E. Mail Liaison Officers are responsible for:

(1) Carrying out the Mail Management Program at the ASC level;

(2) Ensuring that the mail functions at the ASC level are operated in an efficient, cost-effective manner; and

(3) Informing the Mail Manager of address changes and/or personnel additions or deletions so that MMS mail directories can be kept up-to-date.

F. All MMS employees are responsible for:

(1) Notifying the Mail Manager or Mail Liaison Officer, as appropriate, of any change in address;

(2) Notifying persons from whom they regularly receive mail of address changes;

(3) Including at a minimum, the 5-digit ZIP Code and, when available, ZIP + 4 Code in the address of all outgoing mail. Each office should order the required number of National ZIP Code Directories to facilitate the use of the ZIP Codes;

(4) Advising senders of unofficial correspondence that such mail is not to be addressed to their official duty station;

(5) Using the most economical means of sending mail (appropriate size envelopes, packages; appropriate class); and

(6) Including the mail stop codes for each office or employee within the MMS.

7. Procedures. See the Handbook on Mail Management (382.2-H).

# Mail Management

MMSM 382.2-H

## Handbook

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## FOREWORD

This handbook supplements the requirements prescribed by MMSM 382.2, the U.S. Postal Service Domestic Mail Manual, and 41 CFR 201-45.107. The handbook provides guidance for handling incoming, internal, and outgoing mail. All mail prepared and received in the MMS will be in compliance with the provisions of this handbook. Questions regarding the content of this handbook may be directed to the Records and Mail Management Section, Office of Administration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Sewell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'S'.

Director

Date: October 23, 1991

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## CHAPTER 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Purpose. This Handbook, authorized in MMSM 382.2, provides general guidance for managing mail operations in the MMS. The handbook will be used in conjunction with the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM), issued by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

2. Domestic Mail Manual. The DMM contains the regulations of the USPS governing domestic mail service including the rates for postage and restrictions on its use, descriptions of the classes of mail, special services and conditions governing their use, requirements for wrapping and mailing, explanation of collections and delivery services, and general provisions concerning the use of postal services and facilities. Each major mail facility in the MMS should subscribe to the DMM and the DMM Special Postal Bulletins to obtain the latest revisions to the policies and procedures of the USPS regulations.

3. Domestic Mail Manual Availability. Subscriptions to the DMM may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402-0001.

4. Mail Facilities. The MMS will provide efficient mail facilities, in a secure environment, at each installation within its respective areas of jurisdiction. The following guidelines will be considered in establishing mail facilities.

A. Mailroom personnel must maintain security of all information in their possession as set forth in the MMSM 386, Safeguarding of Records and Information.

B. Secure the mailroom against access by unauthorized personnel. Keep the mailroom locked whenever possible, especially when no one is on duty.

C. Locate the mailroom at the optimum point within the installation for postal delivery, mail handling, and service to the organization.

D. Plan mailroom and layout to fit the organization's size, physical facilities, nature of functions, and type and volume of mail.

E. Plan mailroom layout, lighting, and ventilation for efficient workflow.

5. Staffing. At some installations it may be necessary to require that selected mail operations personnel start before regular office hours to receive and process early postal deliveries or remain after regular office hours to accommodate late USPS pickups. When possible, this should be accomplished by split shifts rather than overtime.

6. Mail Services. The following elements will aid in providing effective mail service:

- A. Provide adequate supervision of the mail operations.
- B. Provide "window service" for mail pickup and delivery on needed occasions.
- C. Do not assign tasks to mailroom operations personnel that could impede the delivery or dispatch of mail.
- D. Provide adequately trained backup personnel to assist during times of peak volume or as temporary replacements when regularly assigned personnel are absent.

## CHAPTER 2. INCOMING MAIL

1. Official Mail. Official mail is mail directed to officials or employees of the MMS at their office address. This also applies to mail addressed to former officials or employees of the MMS. Such mail will be delivered to the appropriate office for action.

2. Unsolicited Commercial Mail. Unsolicited commercial mail, whether or not office related, i.e., advertisements, requests for contributions, soliciting sales or subscriptions, training material and flyers, adequately addressed for easy delivery, may be forwarded to the appropriate office. Inadequately addressed unsolicited commercial mail will be returned to the USPS as undeliverable.

3. Official Commercial Mail. It is the responsibility of all employees requesting commercial mail deliveries relating to their program area to inform the sender of their complete and accurate address to ensure delivery.

4. Personal Mail. Mailroom personnel are not required to deliver personal mail received through their facility, unless authorized to do so by their supervisor or the head of the office under special temporary circumstances. Employees in transit as a result of a change in duty station, or on temporary detail, or temporarily assigned to a remote field location, may request the use of an office address until their situations are stabilized. However, employees in transit should forward personal mail to the nearest post office in care of General Delivery or obtain a postal service or private company mail box. Employees should be discouraged from using their office address for delivery of savings bonds, salary checks, and per diem checks.

5. Postage Due. The USPS will offer to deliver postage due mail if the postage required is more than the value of the affixed stamps.

A. Official Mail. Payment of postage due official mail will be made in cash from an imprest fund or by currently dated metered mail machine.

B. Public Mail (General Public). The MMS policy is to refuse postage due mail received from the public, however, exceptions will be made for mail received from leasees, reporters, and payors, etc. Payment of postage due mail will be made in cash from an imprest fund or by dated metered mail machine.

6. Missing Stamps. The following defines the USPS policy on stamps missing from delivered mail.

A. No Stamp. The USPS will not attempt to deliver mail that has no indication of postage being affixed at the time of mailing. Such mail will be returned to the sender.

B. Lost Stamp. When it is apparent from the impression of a cancellation mark that a postage stamp or stamps have been wholly or partially lost the piece will be handled, in the absence of contrary evidence, as if correct postage has been paid.

C. Registered Mail. When the registered mail form is detached from the letter/package it will be delivered without further collections due.

7. Sorting. Incoming mail will be sorted to provide for minimum essential handling between the time it is received until the time it reaches the action office.

8. Special Handling. Special instructions should be provided to each mail station processing mail requiring special handling. The following items of mail require special handling.

A. Registered, Certified, and Insured Mail. Registered mail, certified mail with return receipt, or insured parcel post requires an authorized signature to prove receipt.

B. Classified Mail. The head of each office receiving classified information and materials is responsible for safeguarding such material in conformance with 442 DM 9, National Security Information, Control of Classified Documents. Classified mail can be identified by the markings "Secret" and "Confidential" and will be handcarried, unopened, to the employee designated to receive it. "Top Secret" mail is not dispatched through the USPS or internal mail systems.

C. Restricted Mail. Mail noted "For Official Use Only," "Nonsecurity Controlled," or "Special Attention," i.e., blue envelopes, will be delivered to the addressee unopened.

D. Cash Accountability. Each office which regularly receives cash, checks, or any form of remittance or negotiable instrument will have in place internal controls as required by 340 DM 1, Management Control System, General Policies and Responsibilities.

E. Court Summonses. Legal summonses or complaints either hand-carried or received through the USPS relating to Government litigation will be hand-carried to the addressee or his/her designee. Procedures to be followed upon receipt of a summons or complaint are in 452 DM 1, Litigation, Service of Process.

F. Controlled Mail. Controlling mail is an administrative process which provides management with a record of receipt,

action assignments, status, and a record of responses made to incoming communications which have a limited response time. The following are standards for mail control.

(1) Control Office. Responsibility for controlling mail should be established in a single designated office servicing a principal official within the confines of his/her organization. Procedures on controlling mail are found in MMSM 381.3-H, Preparing and Processing Correspondence--Handbook.

(2) Control Limitations. Control will be limited to communications which warrant special attention because of the subject matter, the originator, or when time limits are established by laws, regulations, or MMS policy.

(3) Standardized Controlled Mail. The following mail will be controlled MMS-wide.

- (a) White House correspondence.
- (b) Correspondence referred by the White House.
- (c) Correspondence from a Member of Congress or a Cabinet Member.
- (d) Correspondence from a Governor.
- (e) Freedom of Information Act requests.

9. Routing. In order to speed the processing of incoming mail, the guidelines below should be followed.

A. Route adequately addressed mail directly to the action office without opening the envelope (unless instructions have been issued to open specific categories).

B. Write routing directions on envelopes that have been opened rather than on a routing form and attach the envelope to the correspondence.

C. Use office organization abbreviations and/or mail stops (see Illustration 1 to this chapter) rather than the complete office title. Room numbers are to be used where they are required to make delivery.

D. Limit date/time stamping to classes of mail for which date/time stamping protects the interest of the Government, its employees, and/or the public.

E. Limit routing for action/response control purposes to specific categories requiring special treatment (see 8F of this chapter).

F. Maintain an up-to-date routing guide to assist in accurate routing, and keep it current on organizational, functional, and personnel changes.

G. Accept misrouted mail from any office, and promptly and accurately reroute it to the appropriate office or return it to the mailroom to be redirected.

## CHAPTER 3. INTERNAL MAIL SERVICE

1. Internal Service. Internal mail service personnel are responsible for sorting, opening (no specified addresses), directing and delivering incoming mail, picking up outgoing mail and are also responsible for picking up, sorting and delivering interoffice mail.
2. Authorized Use of Internal Mail Services. Internal mail services are limited to official or quasi-official mail (see Chapter 4, paragraph 5 of this Handbook). Personal mail, intended for internal or external delivery, will not be picked up or delivered by Government or contractor employees since it would impede Government efficiency and economy (see Title 43 CFR 20.735-6(b)(iii)).
3. Establishing Route Stops. Routes and stops are to be established according to the physical location of the offices within the installation.
4. Scheduling Runs. Internal mail service runs should be scheduled to coincide with USPS delivery and pickup and at a frequency to prevent a buildup of mail at any one location.
5. Publishing Schedules. Internal mail service schedules are to be published and circulated to mail originators or at a minimum posted if the office is very small. Schedules will include times of USPS deliveries, interoffice pickup and delivery, and a cutoff time to receive mail to be processed for the last daily USPS mailing. All MMS mail facilities will publish an Office of Administration Bulletin or Field Office Supplement on mail delivery schedules.
6. Enroute Sorting. Forward sorting during an internal mail run will expedite delivery to offices on the same run if the volume of mail is not too great. Large volumes of mail to be forward sorted should be returned to the mailroom to eliminate delays to the balance of the route and disrupt the published schedule.
7. Interoffice Mail. Mail between offices within the MMS must clearly identify the intended recipient by name, title, room number, mail stop, office title, office code, or any combination thereof necessary to ensure delivery without delay. The following methods may be used to transmit interoffice mail.
  - A. Routing and Transmittal Slips. The General Services Administration (GSA) prescribes the use of Optional Form 41, Routing and Transmittal Slip, for use in routing. The MMS may use DI-535, Route Slip, for routing mail to the Department. Customized route slips should be kept to a minimum unless printing costs can be justified because of more efficient and accurate dispatch of mail.



B. U.S. Government Messenger Envelopes. Standard Forms 65-A, -B, and -C may be used for internal mail but will not be used for mail that is intended to enter the USPS mail stream without being enclosed in an official envelope, or an MMS-owned pouch or sack. The addressee will be clearly identified and all other addresses, used in the past, will be crossed out to eliminate potential errors in delivery.

C. Special Attention Envelopes. Special Attention Mail (blue) envelopes are designed for sending sensitive/confidential material which is to be opened only by the addressee (e.g., personnel or payroll matters). Blue envelopes are not to be used to transmit classified documents. Other interoffice mail should be sent in messenger envelopes. If material requires prompt attention, please use "special" labels. Mail going to Federal offices outside of Interior must be sent in a metered mail envelope. By distinguishing between these two types of mailing it will allow for prompt handling of items requiring action while protecting the privacy of all employees.

8. Mail Confidentiality. Personal mail should not be addressed to the office. Interoffice mail which falls within the purview of the Privacy Act should be routed in a blue envelope.

9. Special Messenger Service. If the installation has a bonafide need to establish a special messenger service to hand-carry MMS communications outside the installation, the service should be centralized and, to the extent possible, shared by all offices located in the installation. Special messenger service schedules will be published and adhered to. Unscheduled special messenger service should be kept to a minimum.

## CHAPTER 4. OUTGOING MAIL

1. Standards. Outgoing mail standards include the selection of the most cost-effective mail service, to facilitate transmission of official mail, use of appropriate envelope specifications, and proper use of direct accountability (metered mail) methods.

2. Metered Mail.

A. All MMS offices are now using the Penalty Mail Postage Meter System. A special penalty mail meter stamp has been prescribed for the MMS. Use of this unique indicium is required on penalty meters used for official mail.

B. Envelopes and labels used by the MMS will not contain any printing in the area where the postage is to be applied. The complete return address and mail stop must appear in the upper left corner along with the phrase "Official Business Penalty For Private Use, \$300" (see Illustration 1 to this chapter).

C. Penalty meter imprints should indicate the correct postage and date for the class and weight of each piece of mail.

D. The MMS is billed monthly through the Online Payment and Collection (OPAC) system. This billing is based on the annual estimate of anticipated Penalty Mail usage.

E. The USPS also provides the MMS headquarters with a quarterly Official Mail Accounting System (OMAS) report containing all official metered mail transactions processed during the quarter. This report is broken down by cost codes for each official metered mail station.

3. Options to Metered Mail.

A. Penalty stamps.

B. Pre-metered envelopes (set without date).

C. Payment by employee (reimbursement by the imprest fund).

4. Mail Services.

A. U.S. Postal Service. All MMS personnel will make maximum and proper use of USPS facilities and services.

B. Contracted Services. The GSA is authorized to negotiate a Governmentwide contract that will provide small package express mail service. Participation, within the limitations of the contract, is mandatory MMS-wide.

C. Private Carrier. Private carriers will be used only when the USPS or GSA Contracted Services cannot provide the necessary service.

D. Electronic Message Service (EMS). The EMS will be used for official business when it can be demonstrated that its use is cost-effective and will increase efficiency. (See 385 DM 7, Electronic Mail Systems.)

5. Authorized Use of Official Mail. Official mail may only be used for mailing articles, documents, and packages which are required to conduct Government business.

6. Unauthorized Use of Official Mail. Mail such as personal letters and Christmas cards, job resumes and applications, Freedom of Information and Privacy Act requests and appeals, complaints, grievances, and all similar materials which do not relate exclusively to the business of the Government may not be sent as metered or postage and fees paid mail. Federal employees and individuals outside the Government are prohibited by law and regulations to use penalty mail for private use. Anyone found using penalty mail for unofficial purposes may be fined up to \$300.00. Federal employees are also subject to disciplinary action.

7. Quasi-Official Mail. The Director, MMS, may authorize the use of official mail services for community or Government employee-related activities to be conducted under his/her auspices. The following are examples of some activities that may be included.

- A. Government employee retirement functions.
- B. MMS sponsored sporting or recreation events.
- C. MMS sponsored special events.
- D. Red Cross blood bank appeals.
- E. State or local government sponsored activities.

8. Envelopes. Envelope standardization is essential to meet the requirements established by the USPS, the GSA, and the Government Printing Office (GPO). All envelopes will be prepared for mailing in a manner that will accommodate the high speed technology currently in use by the USPS (see MMSM 381.3-H, Chapter 10, Preparing and Processing Correspondence).

A. Standards.

(1) Except for USPS required items and appropriate slogans that can be included on ad plates for metered mail, no

other printed, stamped, or affixed markings or design shall be placed on official envelopes or on the front of official post-cards without the approval of the Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget.

(2) Except for self-mailers, no printing is permitted on the inside of envelopes.

(3) Envelopes are dispatched using the most economical service consistent with delivery needs.

(4) The smallest standard size envelope available, that will accommodate the material to be sent, will be used. The USPS levies extra charges on larger size envelopes.

(5) Addresses will include, at a minimum, the 5-digit ZIP Code and, when available, ZIP + 4 Code.

(6) Addresses will be clear, correct, and properly placed on all envelopes.

(7) Addresses will be completely visible through window envelopes.

(8) Letter size window envelopes will be used to the maximum extent possible, except for mailing material that:

- (a) Contains national security information;
- (b) Is highly confidential to the MMS or the addressee;
- (c) Contains material that is to be registered; or
- (d) Is sent to high-level officials in Government or the private sector.

B. Specifications.

(1) Letter envelopes. Letter size envelopes are rectangular in shape with minimum dimensions of 5 inches in length, 3.5 inches in height and .007 inches in thickness and maximum dimensions of 11.5 inches in length, 6.125 inches in height and .25 inches in thickness. The standard letter size envelope used MMS-wide is white, approximately 9.25 by 4.25 inches with black printing. Letter envelopes are used for one to five pages of correspondence that can be folded to .25 inch maximum thickness.

(2) Flat envelopes. Flat envelopes are rectangular in shape and exceed one or more of the maximum dimensions for letter

size envelopes but do not exceed 15 inches in length, 12 inches in height, or .75 inches in thickness. Flat envelopes will be used for communications that cannot be folded or, if folded, will exceed the .25 inch maximum width permitted for letter size envelopes. The standard flat envelopes used MMS-wide are:

- (a) Brown 12 by 9.5 inches;
- (b) Brown 15 by 10 inches; or
- (c) White 12 by 9.5 inches (green diamond border imprinted with the words "First Class").

(3) Batch mailing. When several pieces of mail (at least six pieces) are sent to the same address, the mail should be consolidated into a single flat envelope for mailing.

(4) Mail Pouches. When there is a recurring high volume of mail between two offices and the volume is too great for batch mailing, mail pouches should be considered as a cost effective alternate to individual mailings. Pouch mail is used by mailroom facilities to transmit correspondence to other offices within the MMS on a daily basis by GSA contract for express mail service.

(5) Labels. Imprinted labels are to be used on unprinted flat envelopes and parcels too large to be mailed in flat envelopes.

(6) Postcards. In order to qualify for the postcard rate, cards must measure no more than 4.25 by 6 inches. Postcards that exceed the above measurements will be charged the full First-Class rate by the USPS.

C. Return Address. All official mail of the MMS must bear, in the upper left hand corner of the mail piece, the complete address, including at a minimum, the 5-digit ZIP Code but preferably the ZIP + 4 Code, and the words "Official Business Penalty for Private Use, \$300." The return address must be imprinted or stamped and must not be handwritten or typed. The originator's mail stop should be added to the return address in order to expedite the return of mail determined to be undeliverable by the mailroom or the USPS.

D. Permit Imprints. Individual permit numbers have been assigned to the MMS. The permit numbers are to be used when applying for permits to use special mail services. Permit imprint statements and numbers must appear on all authorized permit imprint mail (see Illustration 2 to this chapter). Authorization to use permit imprints must be approved by the Mail Manager prior to submitting Form 3601, Application to Mail Without Affixing Postage Stamps, to the post office where the

mailings will be made. Deposit permit imprint mail only at the post office authorized accompanied by Form 3602, Statement of Mailing with Permit Imprints, for each mailing. A minimum of 200 pieces of mail is required for use of permit imprint.

E. Business Reply Mail (BRM). The MMS may distribute BRM envelopes, cards, cartons, and labels to any person, concern, or organization from whom or through whom official matter is desired. The BRM will not be used when a response is required by law or regulation. All BRM must either be prepaid by the use of meters (set without date), penalty mail stamp, or permit penalty envelopes imprinted with the legend "Business Reply" (see Illustration 3 to this chapter). A permit number is required for BRM.

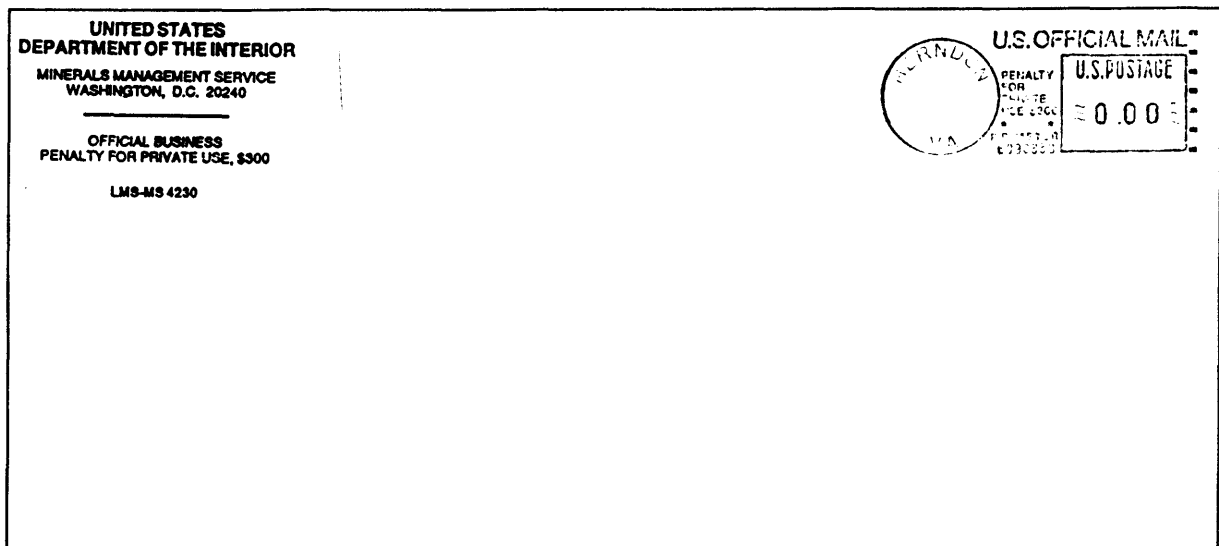
9. Payment for Postal Service. Title 39 U.S.C. and USPS regulations require each Government Agency to reimburse the USPS for postage and fees equivalent to full rates for all mail services received. Each fiscal year the USPS must be furnished a budget estimate for postage. Budget figures are determined based on the prior years' direct accountability records. The budget figures furnished to the USPS are billed monthly by OPAC. The Support Services Branch Subactivity Budget account incurs all costs associated with metered mail, which includes postage rates and United Parcel Service. These charges are included in the monthly Penalty Mail invoice. Also incurred by Support Services Branch are the costs for the daily MMS pouch service between major locations by GSA contract for express mail service.

A. Direct Accountability. The advantage of postage costs based on direct accountability is that costs are more accurately monitored and there is less chance of sampling errors that may distort mail costs.

B. Government Printing Office Mailings. Cost for mailings made by the GPO, will be done by permit number, and billed by OPAC.

10. Insured Mail. The Government Losses in Shipment Act (Title 40 U.S.C. 726) and the Government's general self-insurance policy prohibit Federal Agencies from using registered and insured mail for the sole or primary purpose of obtaining postal indemnity. Claims shall not be made against the USPS for indemnity on items lost or damaged in the mail. However, Comptroller General of the United States Decision B-114874, October 13, 1978 (reference (i)), allows the Government to use registered or numbered insured mail to obtain the "special" services they offer, such as added protection or proof of delivery.

METERED MAIL SAMPLE






PERMIT IMPRINT SAMPLES

<p><b>DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR</b> <b>MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE</b> <b>WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>OFFICIAL BUSINESS</b> <b>PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300</b></p>	<p>FIRST-CLASS MAIL POSTAGE &amp; FEES PAID DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR PERMIT NO. G-270</p>
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<p><b>DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR</b> <b>MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE</b> <b>WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>OFFICIAL BUSINESS</b> <b>PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300</b></p>	<p>SPECIAL FOURTH-CLASS RATE POSTAGE AND FEES PAID DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR PERMIT NO. G-270</p>
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BUSINESS REPLY SAMPLE

U.S. Department of the Interior Minerals Management Service Herndon, VA 22070-4817		<div>No Postage Necessary if Mailed in the United States</div>
Official Business Penalty for private use, \$300	<div><b>BUSINESS REPLY MAIL</b> First Class Permit No. 8330 Herndon VA</div>	
Postage Will Be Paid By Department of the Interior, Herndon, VA		
Minerals Management Service Atlantic OCS Region 381 Elden Street, Suite 1109 Herndon, Virginia 22070-9911		
		

## CHAPTER 5. MAIL CLASSIFICATION

1. Standards. Mail classification standards require the use of the most economical class of mail and, when possible, minimizing use of more expensive classes of mail by requiring:

A. Use of appropriate size envelopes (see chapter 4, paragraph 7.B of this handbook).

B. Proper endorsements for the appropriate mail classes (see paragraph 2 below).

### 2. Classes of Mail.

A. First-Class Mail. All mailable matter, weighing 11 ounces or under (other than postcards) automatically will be sent as first-class mail. First-class mail is divided into non-presorted and presorted to ZIP Code destination. The following items may be mailed only as first-class mail or express mail.

- (1) Matter wholly or partially in writing or typewritten.
- (2) Matter closed against postal inspection.
- (3) Bills and statements of account.

B. Express Mail. Express mail is an expedited, guaranteed delivery class of mail providing overnight or same day service to designated location. This class of mail is particularly designed for time-sensitive materials or letters and is rated by weight and distance. The following express mail services are to be used in order of their listing.

(1) Private Carrier Under Contract. The GSA is authorized to issue a nationwide contract to a private carrier for express small package service to accommodate time requirements not satisfied by the USPS Express Mail Service.

(2) U.S. Postal Service Express Mail Service. Express mail is reliable, convenient, and economical; USPS guarantees overnight next morning delivery.

(3) Alternate Private Carriers. Alternate express mail private carriers should be used only when time, weight, or size requirements are not satisfied by (1) and (2) above.

C. Priority Mail. Priority mail is generally used for rapid delivery (next-day or following-day service). Mail that exceeds 11 ounces and does not exceed 70 pounds and 108 inches in length and girth combined, is considered priority mail. Priority mail is rated by weight and distance.

D. International Mail. International mail includes letters, letter packages, printed matter, small packages of merchandise, and parcel post destined for foreign countries. Army Post Office (APO) and Fleet Post Office (FPO) mail is not considered international mail. International mail provides for either air or surface transportation for the following two basic categories:

(1) Letters, postcards, or letter packages that are comparable to U.S. domestic first-class mail.

(2) Other articles consisting of parcel post (for merchandise) or business communications, regular printed matter, books, and small packets.

E. Second-Class Mail. Second-class mail is generally prepared by printing facilities and is used for mail distribution of newspapers and magazines. A permit must be obtained from the USPS and samples of the proposed publication must be submitted. The MMS generally does not use second-class mail.

F. Third-Class Mail. Third-class mail is matter not mailed or required to be mailed first-class, not endorsed second-class mail, and weighs 16 ounces or less. Circulars and printed matter (not official correspondence) are typical third-class mail, single piece rate, and bulk rate.

G. Fourth-Class Mail. Fourth-class mail includes mailable material weighing 16 ounces or more and not exceeding 70 pounds and 108 inches in length and girth. The basic differences between third- and fourth-class mail are the weight limitations and charges by zone.

H. Alternate Private Carriers. The cost to send a parcel by alternate carrier is not always less than by USPS; however, the following added services are provided.

- (1) Door-to-door service.
- (2) Several attempts at delivery.
- (3) Specific records concerning delivery.
- (4) Delivery acknowledgment.
- (5) Recipient address correction.
- (6) Return of undeliverable package without charge.

(7) Rates include up to \$100 liability protection for each package.

I. Registered Mail. Registered mail provides added protection and security of valuable and important first-class mail, plus evidence of mailing and delivery. The extra security can delay this mail by 24 to 48 hours over normal first-class mail, and its use may prove to be very expensive. If the mailer really needs notification of delivery, certified mail should be considered.

J. Certified Mail. Certified mail provides a record of mailing to the sender and a record of delivery at the Post Office. The carrier delivering the item obtains a signature of the addressee on a postal receipt which is kept at the Post Office for 2 years. Certified mail should be used only when the mailer really needs a return receipt. Certified mail is no faster than first-class mail.

K. Certificate of Mailing. When evidence of mailing is essential rather than evidence of receipt, a Certificate of Mailing is available from the USPS as an inexpensive method to furnish evidence of mailing. Certificates of Mailing do not offer any proof of delivery but simply proves that an item (letter or package) was accepted for mailing by the USPS. If evidence of delivery is required see "Certified Mail."

L. Collect on Delivery (C.O.D.). Mailing an article and having the price and cost of postage collected from the addressee is C.O.D. Mail. This mail service is never used by the MMS.

M. Bulk Mail. Mailings at bulk rates must be made at times and places designated by the Postmaster at the Post Office of mailing. These mailings will generally be limited so as to ensure proper acceptance and verification. There is an annual bulk mailing fee in addition to a one-time permit imprint fee. Bulk mail is used when identical prices of mail can be sorted by 5-digit ZIP Code and must contain at least 200 pieces. Bulk mail can be sent first-, third-, or fourth-class.

3. Endorsements. To ensure consistency of treatment and handling appropriate to the level of the service desired, the MMS will endorse flat envelopes and small parcels with the desired class of mail, i.e. "first-class," "third-class," "parcel post," or "priority." If it is not endorsed for a specific class it will receive first-class service and will be charged first-class rates. Contact your local servicing mailroom for guidance. The following exemptions apply to the first-class rule above.

A. Unendorsed mail weighing over 12 ounces but less than 16 ounces will be treated and charged as single piece third-class Mail.

B. Unendorsed mail weighing 16 ounces or over will be treated and charged as fourth-class parcel post.

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C. Pieces weighing over 12 ounces which require first-class service must be endorsed "first-class" or "priority."

## CHAPTER 6. OPERATIONS

1. General. The purpose of this chapter is to provide guidelines on the operation of the mailroom.

2. Equipment. All MMS mailrooms are equipped with a metered mail machine. Some locations may find it necessary to maintain a backup metered mail system.

A. Metered Mail Machine.

1. Lock metered mail machine when not in use.
2. Ensure correct dates are set daily on metered mail machine.
3. Maintain a daily record of meter register readings for each metered mail machine.

B. Facsimile. Most MMS office locations are equipped with facsimile machines. These machines should be used when speed of transmission is required. Facsimile should be used in place of express mail (if cost effective) to send a document. (When the original is required for verification it should be sent first-class mail.)

3. Spoiled or Damaged Mail. Refunds for spoiled or damaged mail will be submitted on Form 3533 (available from the USPS). Evidence of the spoiled or damaged mailpiece will need to be included. DMM section 147 explains the conditions and procedures to be followed.

4. Repair of Equipment. The MMS has a maintenance agreement with Pitney Bowes on all metered mail equipment. Mailroom representatives should call Pitney Bowes service representatives directly in their area of responsibility. Mailroom representatives must have available a copy of the Purchase Order or Blanket Purchase Agreement for service maintenance, before repairs can be provided.

5. General Operations.

A. Devise a mail quality control checklist for returning improperly addressed mail, if appropriate.

B. Spot check outgoing mail periodically to ensure appropriate use of metered mail.

6. Staffing. See chapter 1 paragraph 5 of this handbook for general staffing requirements.

7. Deliveries. In order for the MMS to maintain an effective

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mail management program, all mail facilities are required to accommodate mail deliveries.

A. Establish standard hours of operations for pick-up and delivery of mail.

B. Require verification of mail material for pick-up or delivery, as appropriate.